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December 4, 1978

Dr. Hans Mark
Room #4C-1000

Dear Dr. Mark:

I appreciate the opportunity you gave Mr. Batchelder and me on Thursday, 8 November to present our views on the application of space photography in the civil sector. We agree fully with your perspective on the merits of starting a remote sensing commercial venture with advanced sensors in high altitude aircraft, evolving later into flights on the Space Shuttle. As we mentioned, Itek became deeply involved in the study of such a venture in 1975. Although that project did not come to fruition then for lack of a high quality cartographic camera, we feel that NASA's purchase of the Large Format Camera may now make such a venture feasible. We have been discussing this possibility with one of the major U.S. aerial survey firms for several months, and anticipate an investment decision early in 1979.

The objective of our briefing to you and others at the policy-making level of government is, however, to illuminate the issues which must be settled if operation of high quality remote sensors is ever to be extended into space for other than intelligence purposes. We feel there is a place on the commercial marketplace for space photography, for the reasons discussed in the enclosed LFC booklet. In addition to technology leadership, the operation we have suggested could relieve pressure on the NRP to open its programs to civil exploitation and would serve as visible evidence of successful technology transfer between sectors of the space program.

Having stated our position to you, OMB, and OSTP, we have no further plans to circulate our concept for photographic operations in space until we see favorable motion in implementation of the President's space policy. We will meanwhile pursue several avenues toward broader application of high performance cameras in aircraft, and may return to you later for advice on the feasibility of leasing government assets for these ventures.

Thank you again for sharing your views on this subject with us.

Very truly yours,

[redacted]

Juan J. Amodei

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